

Message Text

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SUBJ: FUTURE OF US TRADE CENTER TEHRAN

1. I HAD A USEFUL MEETING ON FRIDAY, APRIL 14, WITH MESSRS. STANSBURY AND GARNITZ FROM COMMERCE, AND MRSSRS. ZUCCA AND RAU FROM STATE, AND MEMBERS OF MY STAFF, TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF THE U.S. TRADE CENTER HERE. DURING THIS MEETING I EXPRESSED MY PERSONAL BELIEF THAT THE MIDDLE EAST MARKET FOR AMERICAN EXPORTS, AND IRAN IN PARTICULAR, IS STILL A VERY ATTRACTIVE ONE AND THAT MANY INDICATIONS POINT TO HIGH IMPORT DEMAND EXTENDING OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL DECADES. IF OUR ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE IS CORRECT, THE NEXT SIX TO TWELVE MONTHS SHOULD BE CRITICAL IN EXPOLITING OUR COMPETITIVE EDGE RESULTING FROM THE DOLLAR'S DECLINE.

2. AGAINST THIS BACKDROP, IT SEEMS TO ME UNWISE THAT TEHRAN BE ON THE LIST OF THOSE U.S. TRADE CENTERS BEING CONSIDERED FOR CLOSING. FROM THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE HERE, I BELIEVE TEHRAN RANKS WELL ABOVE THE MEDIAN IN TRADE CENTER PERFORMANCE AND ACHIEVEMENTS. IN THIS REGARD, I WAS PLEASED TO RECEIVE ASSURANCES FROM MRSSRS. STANSBURY AND GARNITZ THAT THIS POST WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ANALYZE AND COMMENT ON THE CRITERIA
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WHICH HAVE BEEN USED IN MAKING APRELIMINARY TANKING OF TRADE CENTER PERFORMANCE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH THE COMMENTS THAT COMMERCE UNDERSECRETARY HARMON MADE TO ME IN WASHINGTON DURING THE RECENT JOINT COMMISSION MEETINGS.

3. IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT ALTERNATIVE TRADE PROMOTION TECHNIQUES MIGHT TAKE UP THE SLACK IF THE TRADE CENTER WERE

CLOSED JUST AS THIS MARKET BEGINS TO EXPAND SIGNIFICANTLY. I BELIEVE THAT THE TRADE CENTER IS DOING A SUCCESSFUL JOB HERE WHICH CANNOT BE TRANSFERRED TO ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS OR FACILITIES, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF OCCASIONAL VERTICAL PROMOTIONS AT THE IRANIAN FAIRGROUND. NO OTHER SUITABLE EXHIBITION PROGRAMS EXIST OR ARE LIKELY TO BE CREATED IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

4. AS OUR MOST VISIBLE AND ONLY FULLTIME TRADE PROMOTION FACILITY IN IRAN, I DO NOT BELIEVE NOW IS THE TIME FOR US TO BE LOWERING OUR PROFILE WHEN WE CAN FULLY EXPECT THE GERMAN, FRENCH, ITALIANS, BRITISH AND JAPANESE TO BE EXPANDING THEIR OWN TRADE PROMOTION EFFORTS. LOCAL BUSINESS COMMENT EMPHASIZES THE NEED FOR RELATIVELY GREATER U.S. EXPORT PROMOTION EFFORTS TO COMPENSATE FOR OUR GEORGRAPHIC DISADVANTAGE COMPARED WITH EUROPE AND THE FACT THAT IN MANY SECTORS WE MUST OVERCOME A TRADITIONAL EUROPEAN MARKET DOMINANCE. I WOULD ALSO BE RELUCTANT TO GIVE A FALSE PERCEPTION OF THE LEVEL OF AMERICAN INTEREST IN IRAN WHICH WOULD BE IMPLICIT IN CLOSING THE TRADE CENTER, RECOGNIZED HERE AS AN INTEGRAL AND IMPORTANT PART OF THE U.S. MISSION.
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